

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY China
SUBJECT Publications and Radios in Harbin/Communist Vulnerabilities

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1. Publications in Harbin were printed either in Chinese or Russian. There was only one Russian paper. It was a daily, except that it did not appear on Mondays. Its name, since 1945, was "Harbinskoye Vremia" ("Harbin Times"). Its editor was "Vaska" Chilikin. "Vaska" is usually a nickname for "Vassili." The paper had a Communist orientation and reprinted items from "Izvestia" and "Pravda." Chilikin, I think, was probably not a Communist personally; probably merely an editor working at his profession. The paper was a vehicle for Communist propaganda. For example, it would publish in full the text of a speech given by Vishinsky in the UN, whereas the speeches of Western officials were reported very briefly. The editor had few assistants because the paper mainly reprinted articles from other papers, such as Soviet publications, although a few items of local interest were included. Beginning in 1950, the Russian Orthodox Church was no longer allowed to insert notices of services in the paper. The "Harbinskoye Vremia" was published by a "collective," but I do not know who made up this group. The pages of the paper were full size and there were four pages. Perhaps the payments for subscriptions covered the operating costs of "Harbinskoye Vremia," because it was the only Russian newspaper in Harbin. There were no Russian magazines.
2. For a period of two years, beginning in 1947 or 1948, large numbers of copies of "Pravda" were sent from Moscow to be sold at Tchurin's department store in Harbin. This was done for propaganda purposes, but no one would buy it for reading purposes. However, local Russians would buy it in bulk (one "chin," i.e. one catty, sold for JMP\$1000) and sell it to Chinese junkmen who bought it for JMP\$3000 or JMP\$4000 per catty. The junkmen then sold it to Chinese factories which used it to manufacture paper. There was a paper shortage in Harbin. When the Soviet Consulate learned of this "disrespectful" treatment of its newspaper, the Consulate stopped delivery of "Pravda" to Tchurin's. "Mezhkniga," a book store, was opened, where copies of "Pravda" and of Soviet books were offered for sale.
3. There were two Chinese newspapers in Harbin. One was a Chinese Communist government publication. The other was a non-government paper, but it was pro-Communist. I have no other information on these publications.

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4. In connection with the possession of radios in Harbin, in 1945 the Soviet Army ordered that all radios in Harbin be turned in to its custody. After about six months, the inhabitants were told that they could reclaim their sets. It was discovered that many of the radios with a fairly large number of tubes had been damaged. In addition, quite a few residents feared to listen to broadcasts after the above measures had been taken. As of 1953 [REDACTED] only a relatively few people in Harbin had radios. In about February 1953 the Chinese Communist authorities ordered all Chinese residents to bring their radios in to be checked. Possession of powerful sets was prohibited. Short wave sets were not permitted. Some people managed to retain a few short wave radios. One occasionally heard from others what items had been transmitted by the Voice of America. This information was spread from person to person and was exaggerated in transmission. I was told that one could listen to the Voice of America in English, because few in Harbin understood it, but that the broadcasts were jammed if they were transmitted in Russian or Chinese. It was dangerous to listen to such broadcasts, because, although there was no law against it, the Chinese Communists were opposed to it and it was clear that one should not listen to Western "propaganda."
5. Groups in Harbin with access to radios included Chinese officials and technicians and Russians who had been employed by the Chinese Changchun Railway. Chinese Communists probably had short wave radios. Even Soviet nationals in Harbin who had been sent out from the USSR had few radios. However, they usually bought sets before returning to the USSR. Most sets in Harbin were long wave. The average Chinese in Manchuria did not have a radio, was little interested in listening to broadcasts, and, moreover, did not have electricity. Public loudspeakers were installed on the main streets of Harbin. The speakers were normally utilized only on special occasions, such as major Soviet and Chinese Communist holidays. Some news was broadcast, but the broadcasts consisted mainly of songs and other music. The loudspeakers broadcast in both the Chinese and Russian languages.
6. [REDACTED] absolute certainty that it was the Voice of America, but those who had heard it always referred to it as such. I was told that reception for the Voice of America, even sometimes when transmitted in the Russian language, was best at 4:00 AM or 5:00 AM, when few people were yet awake and when, as a result, there was less jamming.
7. [REDACTED] that Communist vulnerabilities may be most effectively exploited, by free radio programs and publications, by emphasizing the factual type of program which would prove that Communist propaganda is a mass of lies. For example, a Communist paper, such as "Pravda" or some Chinese Communist publication, prints a story that a "kolchoz" overproduced its quota by a certain percentage. The Western program could state that this was a typical falsehood, that the actual facts were such and such. Also, the US should counter Communist propaganda about mass unemployment and resulting serious hunger conditions in the West by refuting these lies and by explaining that even the small number of unemployed receive generous compensation while out of work which enables them to eat and live adequately. The US also, in mentioning the problem of disarmament and Vishinsky's speeches in the UN, could benefit by describing the true nature of Vishinsky's proposals, the USSR's unwillingness to accept effective controls, and by explaining the US stand on the problem and emphasizing that the US sincerely desires a reduction of armaments under suitable safeguards. [REDACTED] that the

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West should concentrate on pointing out that Communist propaganda is consistently false. By hammering away at the theme that the Communists lie constantly, the West could affect the thinking not only of the people in Communist countries, but might also be able to raise doubts in the minds of the lower level Communist Party members. If this latter effect were achieved, it might have some important repercussions. Incidentally, [REDACTED] the most effective method of disseminating the Western viewpoint would be by leaflet, if it were possible to distribute material from aircraft, for example.

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